

APPENDIX 26A

USDA Forest Service Letter Regarding Section 4(f)
Determination for Climbing Boulders



File Code: 1950; 2330
Date: September 15, 2020

Mr. Josh Van Jura
Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS Project Manager
Utah Department of Transportation
PO Box 141245
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-1245

Dear Mr. Van Jura,

The Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) recently asked the USDA Forest Service whether specific boulders on National Forest System (NFS) lands in Little Cottonwood Canyon qualify for protection under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966. In response, the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest has determined that the following boulders or groups of boulders identified as Parking Lot-West, Bathroom Boulder, Secret Garden, Cabbage Patch, Syringe, 5-Mile, and All Thumbs, do not appear to meet the applicability requirements of 23 CFR §774.11(d) and therefore do not qualify for protection under Section 4(f) of the Transportation Act.

While the Forest Service recognizes that the identified boulders provide convenient recreation opportunities for climbers, the climbing boulders do not play a significant role in the function or availability of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, and are not specifically managed, protected, or otherwise designated in the Forest Plan as a significant recreation resource. Furthermore, other similar recreation opportunities exist in the vicinity of these boulders, and across the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest.

Although the identified boulders do not qualify for protection under Section 4(f) of the Transportation Act, the Forest Service requests that UDOT attempt to preserve these boulders and/or consider relocating boulders, as technically and financially feasible, to maintain recreational opportunities for forest visitors if the current locations of one or more of these boulders conflict with future transportation system improvements.



If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our UDOT Liaison, Mr. Lance Kovel, at 801-999-2131 or lance.kovel@usda.gov

Sincerely,

X

DAVID WHITTEKIEND
Forest Supervisor